

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1606

LIMDIS

ROME FOR AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, CZ
SUBJECT: VATICAN-GOC RELATIONS

REFS A. PRAGUE 1523 B. ROME 9196

1. AMBASSADOR HAD OPPORTUNITY AT LUNCHEON JUNE 9 AT ITALIAN EMBASSY TO TALK WITH PRAGUE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR FRANTISEK TOMASEK, WHOSE ELEVATION TO CARDINAL WAS ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK (REFTELS). TOMASEK EXPECTS TO LEAVE PRAGUE JUNE 13 EN ROUTE TO ROME WHERE HE WILL BE MET BY CZECHOSLOVAK DELGATION OF 20 IN TIME FOR JUNE 19 CANONIZATION OF BISHOP NEUMANN. HE AND OTHER NEWLY NAMED CARDINALS WILL BE INSTALLED AT CONSISTORY JUNE 27. HE WILL RETURN TO PRAGUE BY JULY 1.

2. TOMASEK SAID THAT FATHER JOHN BUKOVSKY IS NOW ON 10-DAY VISIT TO DIOCESES IN BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA, FOLLOWING MEETING WITH GOC CHURCH AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT CHIEF KAREL HRUZA AND PARTY IDEOLOGICAL OFFICIAL (SINOLDR). TOMASEK CHARACTERIZED THESE TWO AS

EXTREMELY TOUGH NEGOTIATORS. BUKOVSKY WILL BE LOOKING FOR
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ACCEPTABLE CANDIDATES TO FILL VACANT BISHOPRICS BUT HAS NO ASSURANCE THAT REGIME WILL NECESSARILY CONCUR IN ANY OF HIS NOMINATIONS. BUKOVSKY WILL ALSO ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT AGENDA FOR NEXT GOC-VATICAN MEETING TO BE HELD IN ROME, FOLLOWING UP ON JULY 1976 PRAGUE SESSION. NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET. HE WILL MAKE SIMILAR TOUR OF SLOVAKIA LATER THIS YEAR.

3. TOMASEK SAYS SLOVAKS ARE EAGER TO HAVE ARCHDIOCESZBP ESTABLISHED IN BRATISLAVA, BUT HE THINKS REGIME IS UNLIKELY TO APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANY SLOVAK ARCHDIOCESE, AND, IF IT SHTFLD, WOULD WANT IT IN SMALLER CITY THAN BRATISLAVA (WHICH IS NOW PART OF TRNAVA DIOCESE).

4. TOMASEK IS ESPECIALLY ANXIOUS TO RECEIVE GOC PERMISSION FOR AUXILIARY BISHOPS, NOTING THAT THE CURRENT AUXILIARY BISHOP IN PRAGUE IS NOT ALLOWED TO FUNCTION IN THAT CAPACITY.

5. TOMASEK THINKS ACTUAL IMPROVEMENT IN VATICAN-GOC RELATIONS HAS BEEN "SMALL" AND IS VERY RESERVED IN HIS HOPES FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT IN STATUS OF CHURCH HERE. HE IS ANXIOUS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PRESENE SITUATION SINCE "THE DOORS MAY SLAM SHUT AND NOT OPEN FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG."

6. CARDINAL TOMASKE WAS PROUD AND HAPPY ABOUT FTETHCOMING CANONIZATION OF BISHOP NEUMANN. HE STATED THERE WOULD BE MASSES IN ALL CHURCHES ON JUNE 19 BUT NO SPECIAL CEREMONIES WILL BE PERMITTED AT BISHIP NEUMANN'S BIRTHPLACE.

COMMENT: WE HAVE SEEN SEVERAL SIGNS THAT GOC IS NERVOUS ABOUT HANDLING

OF CANONIZATION. PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN REPORTER WAS REFUSED JOURNALIST VISA TO DO STORY ON NEUMANN AND AP STRINGER DRAPALOVA TELLS US THAT WHEN SHE WENT TO NEUMANN'S BIRTHPLACE, PRACHATICE, SEVERAL DAYS AGO TO DO STORY, SHE FOUND OUTSIDE CARS WERE BEING FORBIDDEN TO ENTER THE TOWN AND SHE WAS UNABLE TO FIND ANYONE TO ASSIST HER WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC COVERAGE. END COMMENT.
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7. TOMASEK TOLD ITALIAN AMBASSADOR THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT AT RECENT WP FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN MOSCOW HUNGARIAN FONMIN PUJA HAD URGED CHNOUPEK TO TALK WITH VATICAN AT HIGH LEVEL.
BYRNE

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